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NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

28120 7590 04/30/2008

ROPES & GRAY LLP
PATENT DOCKETING 39/41
ONE INTERNATIONAL PLACE
BOSTON, MA 02110-2624

EXAMINER	
TUCKER, ZACHARY C	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1624	

DATE MAILED: 04/30/2008

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/561,033	12/16/2005	Leifeng Cheng	ASZD-P01-119	3968

TITLE OF INVENTION: 2,3-SUBSTITUTED 5,6-DIARYL-PYRAZINE DERIVATIVES AS CB1 MODULATORS

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	\$1440	\$300	\$0	\$1740	07/30/2008

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED. SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.

B. If the status above is to be removed, check box 5b on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or

B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check box 5a on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL, or its equivalent, must be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted. If an equivalent of Part B is filed, a request to reapply a previously paid issue fee must be clearly made, and delays in processing may occur due to the difficulty in recognizing the paper as an equivalent of Part B.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL

Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: **Mail Stop ISSUE FEE**
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
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INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 5 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note: Use Block 1 for any change of address)

28120 7590 04/30/2008

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Note: A certificate of mailing can only be used for domestic mailings of the Fee(s) Transmittal. This certificate cannot be used for any other accompanying papers. Each additional paper, such as an assignment or formal drawing, must have its own certificate of mailing or transmission.

Certificate of Mailing or Transmission

I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

(Depositor's name)

(Signature)

(Date)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/561,033	12/16/2005	Leifeng Cheng	ASZD-P01-119	3968

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nonprovisional	NO	\$1440	\$300	\$0	\$1740	07/30/2008
EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS				
TUCKER, ZACHARY C		1624	514-217050			

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).

- Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.
 "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. **Use of a Customer Number is required.**

2. For printing on the patent front page, list

- (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively,
(2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed.

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE

(B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY)

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent): Individual Corporation or other private group entity Government

4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:

- Issue Fee
 Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)
 Advance Order - # of Copies _____

4b. Payment of Fee(s): (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)

- A check is enclosed.
 Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.
 The Director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).

5. Change in Entity Status (from status indicated above)

- a. Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27. b. Applicant is no longer claiming SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27(g)(2).

NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Authorized Signature _____

Date _____

Typed or printed name _____

Registration No. _____

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

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28120	7590	04/30/2008	EXAMINER	
ROPES & GRAY LLP PATENT DOCKETING 39/41 ONE INTERNATIONAL PLACE BOSTON, MA 02110-2624				TUCKER, ZACHARY C
1624		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
				DATE MAILED: 04/30/2008

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b)

(application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment to date is 318 day(s). If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the Patent Term Adjustment will be 318 day(s).

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/561,033	CHENG ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	

Zachary C. Tucker 1624

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to 16 April 2008.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-10, 12 and 15-17.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some* c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

Response to Amendment

As requested in the correspondence from applicants, filed 16 April 2008 (hereinafter “present amendment”), which is in reply to the Office action mailed 8 January 2008 (hereinafter “previous Office action”), claims 1, 7, 10 and 15-17 have been amended.

Status of Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

In the previous Office action, claims 15 and 16 were rejected under the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, for lack of a disclosure enabling the practice of the full scope of the methods specified in those claims.

In view of the present amendment, which limits claims 15 and 16 to the treatment of obesity and extended abuse, or an addiction and/or relapse disorder, comprising administering a compound of formula Ia or according to claims 1, 9 or 10, or a pharmaceutical formulation comprising a compound of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant, diluent or carrier, the rejection is hereby withdrawn.

In the previous Office action, claim 1 was rejected under the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, for lack of enablement of the embodiment wherein R³ and/or R⁴ are – (CH₂)_r(phenyl)_s, wherein s is equal to 2, which would require a pentavalent carbon atom in the -CH₂- group.

In view of the present amendment, the rejection is hereby withdrawn. The variable "s" is limited to a value of 1 now.

In the previous Office action, claims 1-9, 12 and 15-17 were rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, for indefiniteness of the embodiment wherein “s” in – (CH₂)_r(phenyl)_s is equal to 2.

In view of the present amendment, which limits “s” to a value of 1, the rejection is hereby withdrawn.

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Status of Double Patenting

In the previous Office action, claims 1-4, 12 and 15-17 were provisionally rejected under the judicially-created doctrine of Obviousness-Type Double Patenting (ODP), as being unpatentable over claims 1, 6, 8 and 10-12 of copending Application No. 10/560,862.

The terminal disclaimer filed on 16 April 2008, disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of any patent granted on Application No. 10/560,862 has been reviewed and is accepted.

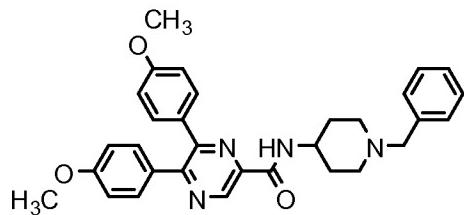
The terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

In view of the Terminal Disclaimer over the copending application, the ODP rejection is hereby withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-10, 12 and 15-17 are allowed.

The closest prior art with respect to the compounds according to instant claims 1-10, and therefore with respect to the composition according to instant claim 12 and the methods according to claims 15-17 is WO 92/02513 (Takasugi et al), which was cited by applicants in the Information Disclosure Statement filed on 16 December 2005. Takasugi et al describes Heterocyclic Compounds, one of which is quite similar to those according to the present invention. The compound named 2,3-bis-(4-methoxyphenyl)-5-[(1-benzylpiperidin-4-yl)-carbamoyl]pyrazine, whose structure is represented by the diagram below:

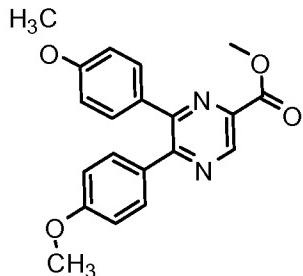


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is prepared in the example on page 84 of the document. This compound does not, however, have the bis-(1-benzylpiperdin-4-yl)-carbamoyl substitution pattern which would be required were it to be embraced by instant claim 1. There is no suggestion in Takasugi et al which would render the compounds of the present invention obvious either.

Also, in the Information Disclosure Statement filed 16 December 2005, applicants cite the following reference:

Ohta et al, *Biological Pharmaceutical Bulletin*, vol. 20(10), pages 1076-1081, which reports the preparation of various 2,3-bis-phenylpyrazines, one of which is 2,3-bis-(*p*-methoxyphenyl)-5-methoxycarbonylpyrazine, whose structure is represented by the diagram below:



and is not embraced by any of the instant claims, because of the lack of the disubstitution pattern about the 4- and 5-positions, and because also when R³ (and/or R⁴) is (CH₂)_nCOOR⁷, R⁷ must be at least a C₄alkyl group, as opposed to the C₁ methyl group found at the position corresponding to R⁷ in the above-diagrammed compound. Ohta et al does not provide any suggestion or motivation to make the compounds of the present invention either.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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Conclusion

All Post-Allowance Correspondence concerning this application must be mailed to:

Mail Stop Issue Fee
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Or you can fax them to the Office of Patent Publications at 703-872-9306, in order to expedite the handling of such correspondence as amendments under 37 CFR 1.312; information disclosure statements, and formal drawings. Sending Post-Allowance papers to Technology Center 1600 will only cause delays in matching papers with the case.

For information concerning status of correspondence sent after receipt of the Notice of Allowance, please contact the Correspondence Branch at (703) 305-8027. The Notice of Allowance also has an insert containing contact information on other items, including Issue Fees, receipt of formal drawings and the status of the application.

/Zachary C. Tucker/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1624